



EXHIBIT 1
DATE 3/13/2013
SB 134

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TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Joy Bruck, AARP Montana
RE: Support of SB 134

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Judiciary Committee, for the record, I am Joy Bruck, State President of AARP Montana.

Elder abuse in Montana is underreported. We at AARP conduct education programs to help seniors protect themselves from being abused, but this doesn't always happen. So prosecutors need a strong statute to use against the abusers. According to prosecutors, the definition of "older person" in the current law needs to be revised to prosecute offenders. We believe this is a reasonable revision giving seniors the justice they deserve.

We also believe the penalty increases will help to strengthen the elder abuse laws. Seniors, particularly those 60+ are many times the victims of financial exploitation. They do not have the time to earn back the money stolen that 40 year olds have. And, victims are typically female, over 70 and may be mentally impaired. Those exploiting them have damaged their quality of life and these victims may not ever regain their financial stability.

Senior population continues to grow in Montana and seniors are frequent targets. We cannot pretend that elder abuse does not happen here in Montana. AARP Montana urges you to support SB 134. Then we can go after these offenders with the full force of the Elder Abuse Act.